



Robert E. Hughes

Executive Director

EPCAMR

Luzerne Conservation District

485 Smiths Pond Road

Shavertown, PA 18708

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Dear Members of the Newport Township Community Organization:

The Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (**EPCAMR**) would like to inform you that we have selected your organization as the recipient of **the 2008 EPCAMR Partnership Award** for your continued efforts in the Newport Creek Watershed to educate our local youth on ways to actively participate in community volunteer activities, clean up, recycle tires and scrap metal, and remove illegal dumping grounds that are scattered throughout the entire Township on abandoned mine lands and on private properties that lack enforcement throughout the year. Many of the members of the Newport Township Community Organization have partnered with EPCAMR and the Luzerne Conservation District over the last several years to rid the Southern Wyoming Valley of rampant illegal dumping in and around the communities public cemeteries, on abandoned mine lands, in partnership with active coal companies, Wilkes University, Luzerne County Community College, and with other regional non-profit organizations like the Earth Conservancy, the Appalachian Coal Country Watershed Team, and state agencies such as the PA Department of Environmental Protection, through the COALS (Clean Our American Lands & Streams) Program, and the PA Game Commission.

EPCAMR is also impressed with your ability to raise the awareness of these environmental problems that plague not only the Southern Wyoming Valley, but the entire Anthracite Region, on a whole. Your volunteers have played an active role in all of the cleanups that EPCAMR has been able to secure funding for within Newport Township and you have done an excellent job of getting the word out through your Township Newsletter (www.newporttownship.com) in addition to raising awareness and taking an active part in overseeing your local government operations at work and participating in our democracy. Your local knowledge of the areas and the local businesses and individuals that EPCAMR has to reach in order to secure landowner agreements and access to in order for all of us to participate in these local community cleanup projects is invaluable. Your hands-on approach to get your hands dirty along side of our staff and volunteers is to be commended. Newport Township, and all of its smaller communities, Glen Lyon, Wanamie, Lee, Honey Pot, Sheatown, Newport Center, Alden Station, should be very proud to know that your collective efforts in our partnership to reclaim abandoned mine lands, remediate streams impacted by abandoned mine drainage, and to educate our youth on ways in which they can actively participate in community projects that will improve their own community, are all very positive attributes of a community group that cares about where they live, has a sense of true civic duty and pride, and is always looking out for their children's future in our area. The Newport Township Community Organization is a model group of citizen volunteers that others should emulate throughout the Wyoming Valley.

I don't want to single individuals out, because I believe that the organization as a whole is what kept our partnership and projects moving forward over the last few years. However, Mr. Tom Kashatus, has been our local contact for several years, and was very instrumental in maintaining an open line of communications with EPCAMR to discuss the Newport Township community needs and always expressed his willingness to get us whatever resources we needed during the course of each and every cleanup project over the last few years. All of the volunteers, who have participated in the cleanups over the years, gave up their valuable personal time, effort, and use of their vehicles to assist with the removal of tons of debris, garbage, scrap metal, and tires from the Newport Township area. I cannot thank them all enough for their efforts and environmental ethic to ensure that the sites that we had chosen to cleanup were free of all debris only to be green again in the Spring and Summer seasons throughout the year.

Congratulations,

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